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By Urvin Croes

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Army pausing helicopter flights near Washington airport after close calls

By TARA COPP

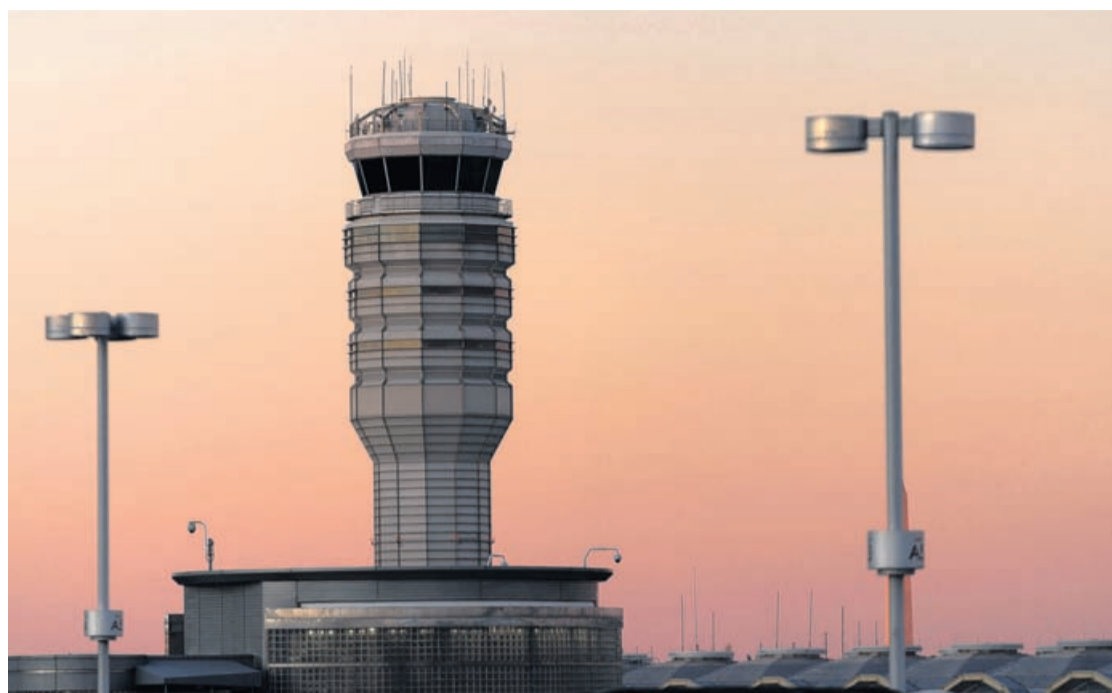
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Army is pausing helicopter flights near a Washington airport after two commercial planes had to abort landings last week because of an Army Black Hawk helicopter that was flying to the Pentagon.

The commander of the 12th Aviation Battalion directed the unit to pause helicopter flight operations around Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport following Thursday's close calls, two Army officials confirmed to The Associated Press on Monday. One official said the flights have been paused since Friday.

The pause comes after 67 people died in January when a passenger jet collided in midair with a Black Hawk helicopter at Reagan airport.

The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide details that were



The air traffic control tower at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport is seen at sunset, Feb. 1, 2025, in Arlington, Va.

not publicly announced. The unit is continuing to fly in the greater Washington, D.C., region.

The unit had begun a return to flight within the last week, with plans to gradually increase the number of flights over the next four

weeks, according to an Army document viewed by the AP.

Thursday's close call involved a Delta Air Lines Airbus A319 and a Republic Airways Embraer E170, according to the National Transportation Safety

Board.

They were instructed by air traffic control to "perform go-arounds" because of a "priority air transport" helicopter, according to an emailed statement from the Federal Aviation Administration.

Associated Press

The priority air transport helicopters of the 12th battalion provide transport service to top Pentagon officials. It was a Black Hawk priority air transport known as PAT25 that collided with the passenger jet in midair in January.

That crash was the worst U.S. midair disaster in more than two decades. In March, the FAA announced that helicopters would be prohibited from flying in the same airspace as planes near Reagan airport.

The NTSB and FAA are both investigating the latest close call with an Army helicopter.

The Army said after the latest incident that the UH-60 Blackhawk was following published FAA flight routes and air traffic control from Reagan airport when it was "directed by Pentagon Air Traffic Control to conduct a 'go-around,' overflying the Pentagon helipad in accordance with approved flight procedures." □

20 attorneys general ask federal judge to reverse deep cuts to U.S. Health and Human Services

By REBECCA BOONE and AMANDA SEITZ

Associated Press

Attorneys general in 19 states and Washington, D.C., are challenging cuts to the U.S. Health and Human Services agency, saying the Trump administration's massive restructuring has destroyed life-saving

programs and left states to pick up the bill for mounting health crises.

The lawsuit was filed in federal court in Rhode Island on Monday, New York Attorney General Letitia James said. The attorneys general from Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Ha-

waii, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia signed onto the complaint. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. restructured the agency in March, eliminating more than 10,000 employees and collapsing 28 agencies under the sprawling HHS umbrella into 15, the attorneys general said. An additional 10,000 employees had already been let go by President Donald Trump's administration, according to the lawsuit, and combined the cuts stripped 25% of the HHS workforce.

"In its first three months, Secretary Kennedy and this administration deprived HHS of the resources necessary to do its job," the attorneys general wrote.

Kennedy has said he is

seeking to streamline the nation's public health agencies and reduce redundancies across them with the layoffs. The cuts were made as part of a directive the administration has dubbed, "Make America Healthy Again."

HHS is one of the government's costliest federal agencies, with an annual budget of about \$1.7 trillion that is mostly spent on health care coverage for millions of people enrolled in Medicare and Medicaid. James, who is leading the lawsuit, called the restructuring a "sweeping and unlawful assault" that would endanger lives.

"This is not government reform. This is not efficiency," James said during a press conference Monday.

The cuts have resulted in laboratories having limited testing for some infectious diseases, the federal

government not tracking cancer risks among U.S. firefighters, early childhood learning programs left unsure of future funds and programs aimed at monitoring cancer and maternal health closing, the attorneys general say. Cuts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also have hampered states' ability to respond to one of the largest measles outbreaks in recent years, the lawsuit says.

"This chaos and abandonment of the Department's core functions was not an unintended side effect, but rather the intended result," of the "MAHA Directive," they said. They want a judge to vacate the directive because they say the administration can't unilaterally eliminate programs and funding that have been created by Congress. □



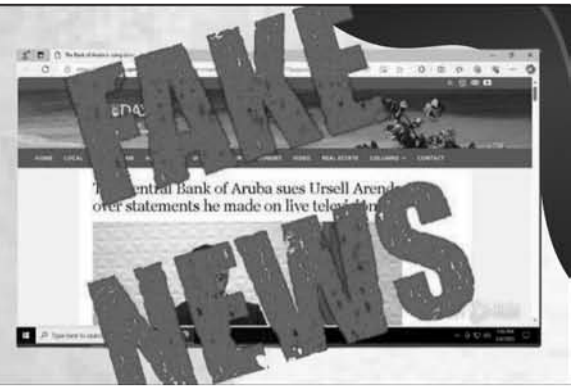
U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. speaks during a Make Indiana Healthy Again initiative event in Indianapolis, April 15, 2025.

Associated Press

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Trump administration says it will pay immigrants in the U.S. illegally \$1,000 to leave the country

By REBECCA SANTANA

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pushing forward with its mass deportation agenda, President Donald Trump's administration said Monday that it would pay \$1,000 to immigrants who are in the United States illegally and return to their home country voluntarily. The Department of Homeland Security said in a news release that it would also pay for travel assistance and that people who use an app called CBP Home to tell the government they plan to return home will be "deprioritized" for detention and removal by immigration enforcement.

"If you are here illegally, self-deportation is the best, safest and most cost-effective way to leave the United States to avoid arrest," Secretary Kristi Noem said. "DHS is now offering illegal aliens financial travel assistance and a stipend to return to their home country through the CBP Home App."

The department said it had already paid for a plane ticket for one migrant to return home to Honduras from Chicago and said more tickets have been booked for this week and next.

It's a major part of Trump's administration

Trump made immigration enforcement and the mass deportation of immigrants in the United States illegally a centerpiece of his campaign, and he is following through during the first months of his administration. But it is a costly, resource-intensive endeavor.

While the Republican administration is asking Congress for a massive increase in resources for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement department responsible for removing people from the



President Donald Trump gestures from the stairs of Air Force One upon his arrival at Joint Base Andrews, Md., Sunday, May 4, 2025.

country, it's also pushing people in the country illegally to "self-deport."

It has coupled this self-deportation push with television ads threatening action against people in the U.S. illegally and social media images showing immigration enforcement arrests and migrants being sent to a prison in El Salvador.

The Trump administration has often portrayed self-deportation as a way for migrants to preserve their ability to return to the United States someday, and the president himself suggested it on Monday while speaking to reporters at the White House. He said immigrants who "self-deport" and leave the U.S. might have a chance to return legally eventually "if they're good people" and "love our country."

"And if they aren't, they won't," Trump said. But Aaron Reichlen-Melnick, a senior fellow at the American Immigration Council, which advocates for immigrants, said there's a lot

for migrants to be cautious about in the latest offer from Homeland Security.

He said it's often worse for people to leave the country and not fight their case in immigration court, especially if they're already in removal proceedings. He said if migrants are in removal proceedings and don't show up in court they can automatically get a deportation order and leaving the country usually counts as abandoning many applications for relief including asylum applications.

It can be an intricate process

And Homeland Security is not indicating that it is closely coordinating with the immigration courts so that there are no repercussions for people in immigration court if they leave, he said.

"People's immigration status is not as simple as this makes it out to be," Reichlen-Melnick said.

He questioned where Homeland Security would get the money and the authorization to make the payments

and he suggested they are necessary because the administration can't arrest and remove as many people as it has promised so it has to encourage people to do it on their own.

"They're not getting their numbers," he said.

As part of its self-deportation effort, the Trump administration has transformed an app that had been used by the Biden administration to allow nearly 1 million migrants to schedule appointments to enter the country into a tool to help migrants return home. Under the Biden administration, it was called CBP One; now it's dubbed CBP Home.

Homeland Security said "thousands" of migrants have used the app to self-deport.

But Mark Krikorian, who heads the Center for Immigration Studies, which advocates for less immigration, said he doesn't see the offer of paying people to go home as an admission that something in the Trump

administration's immigration enforcement agenda isn't working. Considering the millions of people who are in the country illegally, he said, it's impossible to deport all of them so the administration has to combine its own enforcement efforts with encouraging people to go home voluntarily.

Krikorian said he supports the idea of paying migrants to leave although he questioned how it would work in reality.

"How do you make sure that they've actually gone home? Do you make them sign an agreement where they agree not to challenge their removal if they were to come back?" he questioned. "The execution matters, but the concept is sound."

This has been tried before

Other countries have tried various iterations of paying migrants to return home. There's a reason it's attractive to governments wanting to encourage migrants to go. It costs less to buy someone a plane ticket and some incentive money than it does to pay to find them, detain them if necessary, wait for the courts to rule on their case and then send them home.

The Department of Homeland Security said that it costs \$17,121 to arrest, detain and remove someone in the U.S. illegally.

Voluntary returns also don't require extensive government-to-government negotiations to get a country to take back its citizens, which can be a major benefit. There are a number of countries that either don't take back their own citizens who are being returned by U.S. immigration enforcement officials or make that process challenging. □

Prison guard who helped beat cuffed New York inmate to death pleads guilty to manslaughter

By **MICHAEL HILL**
Associated Press

UTICA, N.Y. (AP) — A corrections officer pleaded guilty to manslaughter Monday in the fatal beating of a handcuffed inmate at an upstate New York prison an attack that was caught on video by guards' body cameras, sparked public outrage and led to charges against more than a dozen people. Christopher Walrath, 36, was one of six guards charged with second-degree murder in the Dec. 9 beating of Robert Brooks at the Marcy Correctional Facility.

He pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter during a hearing at state court in Utica.

The plea deal, which was the first agreed to by one of the six who were charged with murder, calls for Walrath to get a 15-year prison term. He will remain free on bail pending his Aug. 4 sentencing.

Under questioning from Onondaga County District Attorney William Fitzpatrick, the special prosecutor, Walrath admitted that he and other guards assaulted Brooks. He also acknowledged that he put Brooks in a chokehold, that he



Correctional officer Christopher Walrath, center, appears in Oneida County Court, Monday, May 5, 2025, in Utica, N.Y., to enter a guilty plea for manslaughter in the December 2024 death of inmate Robert Brooks.

struck the inmate's body and groin and that he lied to investigators about what happened.

Walrath, who resigned from his guard job, appeared somber with his hands clasped in front of him as he answered questions with either "yes" or "correct." He and his attorney declined to comment while leaving court.

Brooks began serving a 12-year sentence for first-

degree assault in 2017 and was transferred to Marcy from a nearby lockup on the night he was beaten to death. Fitzpatrick said Brooks was beaten three times that night, the last of which was the attack caught on bodycam footage.

"The reality is, he did nothing. It was welcome to Marcy," the prosecutor said of the reason for the beatings. He told reporters after the

hearing that Walrath left his post to join in the attacks.

"Sadly, just emblematic of a system and a problem that is persistent at that institution, and perhaps others as well," Fitzpatrick said. He said the plea deal was based on the evidence of Walrath's involvement in the beatings and the prosecutor's judgment that the blows Walrath inflicted on Brooks "were non-lethal." Fitzpatrick said it was pos-

sible the guilty plea would spur other guards to reach agreements, but that his office had not had recent discussions with the other defense attorneys.

Brooks' son Robert Brooks Jr., who was at the hearing, said in a statement afterward that the guilty plea was "one important but modest step on the long road to justice for my father."

"Now, Mr. Walrath's life is in the hands of prison officials. This must be a terrifying prospect for him and his family, knowing what staff is capable of, and how little the system values the lives of incarcerated people," the victim's son said. "I pray that Mr. Walrath has the opportunity in prison to rehabilitate himself, and come out a better man."

In addition to the six guards who were charged with murder, three workers at the prison about 180 miles (290 kilometers) northwest of New York City were charged with manslaughter and another was charged with evidence tampering.

Three other prison workers have reached agreements but have yet to enter those pleas, according to prosecutors. □

Massive repair job on leaky NYC aqueduct will take a few more years to finish

By **MICHAEL HILL**
Associated Press

A \$2 billion project to fix a massive leak in a water tunnel that supplies about half of New York City's water that was already paused recently due to drought conditions, won't be completed for a few more years, city officials said Monday. Department of Environmental Protection officials have been planning for years to temporarily shut down a section of the Delaware Aqueduct north of the city to address the leak of up to 35 million gallons per day, almost all of it beneath the Hudson River. The planned eight-month

shutdown will allow workers to hook up a bypass tunnel that has been constructed under the river.



Tunnel workers push equipment up a rail track to a machine boring a 2.5-mile bypass tunnel for the Delaware Aqueduct in Marlboro, N.Y., May 16, 2018.

Associated Press

City officials announced the shutdown of the aqueduct last fall, timing the cut-off of water from the Catskill region for when seasonal demands are lower. But the work was paused in November due to a drought warning and low levels in the city's other reservoirs. The delay means the environmental agency will have to enter into a new contract for the construction work. Officials also remain concerned about below-average precipitation and plan to upgrade the aqueduct's pumps. So they don't expect the project to be completed until after 2027.

"A new contract must take every contingency into account to ensure we meet our critical responsibility of providing the highest quality water possible to nearly 10 million New Yorkers every day, without exception," Commissioner Rohit T. Aggarwala said in a prepared release.

The aqueduct is the longest tunnel in the world and carries water for 85 miles (137 kilometers) from four reservoirs in the Catskill region to other reservoirs in the northern suburbs. It serves more than 8 million New York City residents. The sprawling system also serves some upstate municipalities. □

Europe launches a drive to attract scientists and researchers after Trump freezes US funding

By CATHERINE GASCHKA
and LORNE COOK
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The European Union launched a drive on Monday to attract scientists and researchers to Europe with offers of grants and new policy plans, after the Trump administration froze U.S. government funding linked to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

"A few years ago, no one would have imagined that one of the biggest democracies in the world would cancel research programs under the pretext that the word diversity was in this program," French President Emmanuel Macron said at the "Choose Europe for Science" event in Paris.

"No one would have thought that one of the biggest democracies in the world would delete with a stroke the ability of one researcher or another to obtain visas," Macron said. "But here we are."

Taking the same stage at the Sorbonne University, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that the EU's executive branch would set up a "super grant" program aimed at offering "a longer-term perspective to the very



French President Emmanuel Macron and European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen attend the "Choose Europe for Science" event, to encourage researchers and scientists from all over the world to practice in Europe, at the Sorbonne University in Paris, Monday, May 5, 2025.

Associated Press

best" in the field.

She said that 500 million euros (\$566 million) will be put forward in 2025-2027 "to make Europe a magnet for researchers." It would be injected into the European Research Council, which already has a budget of more than 16 billion euros (\$18 billion) for 2021-2027.

Von der Leyen said that the 27-nation EU intends "to enshrine freedom of scientific research into law" with a new legal act. As

"the threats rise across the world, Europe will not compromise on its principles," she said. Macron said that the French government would also soon make new proposals to beef up investment in science and research.

Last month, hundreds of university researchers in the United States had National Science Foundation funding canceled to comply with U.S. President Donald Trump's order to end sup-

port to research on diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as the study of misinformation.

More than 380 grant projects have been cut so far, including work to combat internet censorship in China and Iran and a project consulting with Indigenous communities to understand environmental changes in Alaska's Arctic region.

Some terminated grants that sought to broaden the diversity of people study-

ing science, technology and engineering. Scientists, researchers and doctors have taken to the streets in protest.

While not mentioning the Trump administration by name, von der Leyen said that it was "a gigantic miscalculation" to undermine free and open research.

"We can all agree that science has no passport, no gender, no ethnicity, no political party," she said. "We believe that diversity is an asset of humanity and the lifeblood of science. It is one of the most valuable global assets and it must be protected."

Von der Leyen's drive to promote opportunities in Europe in the field of science and take advantage of U.S. policy shifts dovetails with the way that she has played up the potential for trade deals with other countries since Trump took office in January and sparked a tariff war last month. The former German defense minister, and trained doctor, vowed that the EU would also address some of the roadblocks that scientists and researchers face, notably excessive red tape and access to businesses. □

Anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany sues after spy agency labels it an extremist party

BERLIN (AP) — The anti-immigration Alternative for Germany party on Monday sued the domestic intelligence service for classifying it as a right-wing extremist organization, a decision that subjects it to greater surveillance from authorities.

The party known as AfD, which placed second in national elections in February, took action at an administrative court in Cologne, where the intelligence service has its headquarters.

The decision by the intelligence service formally known as the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution means

its officials can now use informants and other tools such as audio and video recordings to monitor the party's activities.

The office warned of a threat to Germany's democratic order, saying the anti-immigration party "disregards human dignity," in particular by what it called "ongoing agitation" against refugees and migrants, many from Muslim-majority countries.

In a statement, the party accused the intelligence service of violating the constitution by trying to criminalize what the AfD said was permitted expressions of opinion and criticism of German immigra-

tion policy over the last decade.

"With our lawsuit, we are sending a clear signal against the abuse of state power to combat and exclude the opposition," party co-leaders Tino Chrupalla and Alice Weidel said, alleging an effort by the service to "distort democratic competition and delegitimize millions of votes."

AfD was formed in 2013. Its platform initially focused on opposition to bailouts for struggling eurozone members, but its rejection of a 2015 decision by then-Chancellor Angela Merkel to let large numbers of refugees into Germany

helped turn the party into a significant political force. Far-right parties have been gaining ground across Europe and the AfD attracts

international attention, including support from tech billionaire Elon Musk, a close ally of U.S. President Donald Trump. □



Alice Weidel, co-leader of the Alternative for Germany (AfD), speaks during the election party at the party's headquarters in Berlin Germany, Feb. 23, 2025.

Associated Press

Israel launches airstrikes on Yemen a day after Houthi rebels strike Israeli airport

MELANIE LIDMAN

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's military targeted Houthi rebels in Yemen's Red Sea city of Hodeida with a punishing round of airstrikes, a day after the Iranian-backed rebels launched a missile that hit Israel's main airport.

The rebels' media office said at least six strikes hit the crucial Hodeida port Monday afternoon. Other strikes hit a cement factory in the Bajil district in Hodeida province, the rebels said.

The Israeli military said more than 20 Israeli fighter jets took part in the operation, dropping more than 50 munitions on dozens of targets. On Sunday, the Houthis launched a missile from Yemen that struck an access road near Israel's main airport, briefly halting flights and commuter traffic. Four people were lightly injured. It was the first time a missile struck the grounds of Israel's airport since the start of the war.

The Houthis claimed that the strikes were a joint Israeli-American operation. However, a U.S. defense official said U.S. forces did not participate in the Israeli strikes on Yemen on Monday. The strikes were not



Israeli security forces inspect the site where the Israeli military said a projectile fired by Yemen's Houthi rebels landed in the area of Ben Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv, Israel, on Sunday, May 4, 2025.

Associated Press

part of Operation Rough Rider, which is the ongoing U.S. military operation against the Houthis in Yemen to prevent them from targeting ships in the Red Sea that started March 15. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

Separately, the U.S. military launched multiple strikes Monday on the Yemeni

capital, Sanaa, another U.S. official said. That official also spoke on condition of anonymity, to discuss military operations.

The Houthi-run health ministry said at least 21 people were wounded in the Israeli strikes on the Bajil cement factory.

Nasruddin Amer, head of the Houthi media office, said the Israeli strikes won't

deter the rebels, vowing that they will respond to the attack.

"The aggressive Zionist-American raids on civilian facilities will not affect our military operations against the Zionist enemy entity," he said in a social media post.

He said the Houthis will escalate their attacks and won't stop targeting ship-

ping routes and Israel until it stops the war in Gaza.

The Houthis have targeted Israel throughout the war in solidarity with Palestinians, raising their profile at home and internationally as the last member of Iran's self-described "Axis of Resistance" capable of launching regular attacks on Israel. The U.S. military under President Donald Trump has launched an intensified campaign of daily airstrikes targeting the Houthis since March 15.

Houthi rebels have fired at Israel since the war with Gaza began on Oct. 7, 2023. The missiles have mostly been intercepted, although some have penetrated Israel's missile defense systems, causing damage. Israel has struck back against the rebels in Yemen.

The Israeli military said it targeted the Hodeida port on Monday because Houthi rebels were using it to receive weapons and military equipment from Iran. Rebel-held Hodeida, about 145 kilometers (90 miles) southwest of the capital of Sanaa, has been key for food shipments into Yemen as its decade-long war has gone on. □

The U.S. says Congo and Rwanda submit a draft peace proposal

By **JUSTIN KABUMBA and MONIKA PRONCZUK**
Associated Press

GOMA, Congo (AP) —

Congo and Rwanda have submitted a draft peace proposal as part of a U.S.-led process that could end

fighting in resource-rich eastern Congo, a U.S. official said Monday.

President Donald Trump's senior adviser for Africa and the Middle East, Massad Boulos, said on social media he welcomed the draft text "received from both (Congo) and Rwanda," calling it "an important step."

Details of the draft were not immediately clear, including whether it offers to ease U.S. access to the region's critical minerals something Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi has mentioned in return for U.S. help in calming the hostilities.

The decades-long conflict in eastern Congo escalated in January, when the Rwanda-backed M23 reb-

els seized the strategic city of Goma, followed by the city of Bukavu in February. The fighting has killed some 3,000 people and raised the fears of a wider regional war.

Eastern Congo has been in and out of crisis for decades. Dozens of armed groups are vying for territory in the mining region near the border with Rwanda. The conflict has created one of the world's largest humanitarian crises with more than 7 million people displaced, including 100,000 who fled homes this year. Congo is the world's largest producer of cobalt, a mineral used to make lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles and smartphones. The country also has sub-

stantial gold, diamond and copper reserves.

Monday's draft peace proposal comes after Secretary of State Marco Rubio last month oversaw the signing by Congo and Rwanda of a pledge to work toward a peace deal. Rwanda's foreign minister, Olivier J.P. Nduhungerehe, told the Rwanda Broadcasting Agency on Monday that he would meet Congo's foreign minister in the third week of May to negotiate a final peace agreement.

He said he hoped the presidents of Rwanda and Congo would sign the agreement by mid-June at the White House in the presence of Trump and heads of state from the region. □



Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosts a signing ceremony in which Congo's Foreign Minister Therese Kayikwamba Wagner, left, and Rwanda's Foreign Minister Olivier Nduhungerehe, right, pledge to work toward a peace deal on Friday, April 25, 2025, at the State Department in Washington.

Associated Press

Aruba's underwater wonderland

ORANJESTAD - Exploring the underwater wonders is something you should definitely do during your stay in Aruba. The underwater world has everything to offer that makes a snorkel trip so exceptional; an impressive, colorful sea life with exotic fishes, turtles and beautiful coral reef. The historic shipwrecks, located on the Aruban seabed are also worth a visit. Aruba is known for its white beaches and blue oceans, which means there are many fascinating underwater spots, where you can take your snorkeling gear and we selected the top spots for you.

Tres Trapi



Tres Trapi means tree steps in Papiamentu, Papiamentu is together with Dutch the official language spoken on Aruba. The beach is called Tres Trapi because it is accessible by the tree steps carved into the rocks. Tres Trapi is a small rocky beach, located on the north-western side of the island, approximately 5 to 10 minute drive from Palm Beach. From the unique steps you can easily walk over the beach into the clear and turquoise blue ocean. While snorkeling you will encounter all kind of tropical fishes and sea stars. The kind of starfish you will find in the Aruban waters is the red cushion sea star. This is a starfish that is commonly found in the shallow waters of the Caribbean sea and if you are lucky during your snorkeling visit to Tres Trapi, you may come across one of the green sea turtles. Respect the animal, keep your distance

and enjoy the view. Also remember; it is a once in a life time experience.

Antilla shipwreck



Antilla is a 400-foot-long long ship, built in 1939 in Hamburg, Germany. Antilla came to Aruba, because it had to find a neutral port. When Germany invaded the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, the crew decided to let their own ship sink, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Dutch Navy. Antilla lies on its portside in Malmok bay, and the sunken word war two ship is now one of Aruba's most popular snorkeling and dive spots. However, the ship wreck can only be reached by boat. The ship is visible from the surface and during your snorkeling trip you be surrounded by hundreds of tropical fishes, but the ship wreck alone is already impressive enough.

Baby Beach

Baby beach; a white beach, with a crystal blue ocean. The beach is located on the southern part of the island. On the way to the famous beach, you will drive through the old capital of Aruba, San Nicolas. The old Aruban culture can be still felt and experienced here, so do not hesitate to get out of your car and walk around for a while. Baby beach is a child friendly beach, since it is shallow and the water has a pleasant temperature. The name therefore fits well



with the beach. Baby beach is an excellent beach for snorkeling, especially if you want to go with small children, because the water remains shallow and there are still many underwater wonders to see. In the ocean there is an area marked until where it is recommended to snorkel and on the beach you will find different facilities. It is a perfect beach to spend your day snorkeling and relaxing.

Mangel Halto



Mangel Halto beach is located in Savaneta, on the southern-west part of the island. The beach is different from the other beaches in Aruba; it is beach full of mangroves. You reach the beach by a bridge through the mangroves and then you will have several entrances to the sea. There are diverse spots where you can enjoy a perfect beach day, wooden stairs made to enter the water and a dock to sit on and enjoy the view. Mangel Halto is also worth a visit for the snorkeling experience. Inside the bay, the water is clear and you find many colorful fish. Outside the bay is a bit more challenging for beginners because of the wind and the waves, but the coral is alive and it is just like snorkel heaven. □

Feeling parched? Grab refreshment by the side of the road!



(Oranjestad)—Touring the island in the blistering heat can leave one feeling rather thirsty and looking to cool off. Luckily there are a few stands along the roads of Aruba that can offer you just what you need: a nice, refreshing beverage!

These “coconut stands” can be found at several locations on the island, where you can cool off with delicious smoothies, drinks, snacks, and of course, fresh coconuts! Perfect during family outings around the island, these stands can be found in the following locations:

- Near the red Anchor in San Nicolas
- On the Linear Park in Oranjestad (in front of airport runway)
- At the California Light House hill
- Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin
- Bushiribana Beach (Near the Ling & Song Supermarket)

Weekend of Celebration at St. Regis for the Official Opening of Akira Back A New Reference of Innovative Gastronomy in Aruba



(Oranjestad)—The St. Regis Aruba Resort proudly announces the official opening of its exclusive rooftop restaurant: Akira Back. Led by world-renowned Chef Akira Back, this is the brand's first restaurant in Latin America. Located within Aruba's luxurious new resort, Chef Back and his team serve a sophisticated fusion of Japanese influences with vibrant Korean flavors, showcasing a rich culture in every dish.

Inspired by Aruba's natural beauty and the refined art of Asian cuisine, guests enjoyed an innovative interpretation of steak and sushi that transcends culinary borders.

"Opening a restaurant at

The St. Regis Aruba Resort is an incredible milestone in my culinary career. I'm honored to begin this new chapter in Aruba, an island that inspires a fusion of culture and flavor, perfectly aligned with my Japanese-Korean culinary style. Akira Back restaurant is a celebration of my heritage, and I hope guests will enjoy unforgettable evenings sharing food and discovering dishes that tell the story of my life," the chef shared during his visit to Aruba.

Chef Back curated a menu that pays homage to his heritage and the inspirations that have shaped his culinary style. Highlights among the appetizers include:

- Akira Back Tuna Pizza



with Umami Aioli, Micro Shiso, and White Truffle Oil

- Wagyu Bulgogi Taco with Tomato Ponzu
- A classic Yellowtail Carpaccio with Jalapeño Sauce and Blood Orange Soy

Sushi lovers shouldn't miss his famous creations such as Hot Mess (Crab Tempura, Avocado, Sashimi Poke, and Marinated Seaweed) or Cow Wow (Braised Short

Rib with Asian Slaw).

For main courses, the restaurant offers selections of Japanese A5 Wagyu or other premium meats, all served with his signature blend of salt and butter. For seafood lovers:

- Miso Butterfish
- Lobster Tail with Truffle Potato Foam and Mango Papaya Hot Sauce Reduction (inspired by Aruba)
- King Crab Merus with Garlic Butter and Chili Aioli – all must-tries.

Akira Back restaurant also offers Japan-inspired cocktails like the Japanese Lemon Drop and Omija Sunset, along with a selection of sake, shochu, wines, and other premium liquors.

The restaurant's décor includes artwork by his mother, Young Hee, a recognized

artist whose colorful designs decorate the dining room and even feature on personalized plates.

Chef Akira Back is considered one of the global leaders in modern Asian cuisine. Since opening in Seoul with a Michelin star, his portfolio now includes 25 restaurants around the world – Aruba is his first in the Caribbean.

Olivier Reschreiter, General Manager of The St. Regis Aruba Resort, stated:

"We are proud to welcome Chef Akira Back to our family, elevating our culinary offering to an artistic level and creating an unmatched experience in Aruba." □

Akira Back is open daily for dinner from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. For more information or reservations, visit: stregisarubaresort.com



Dining in? Try making a local favorite How to make "funchi hasa"

(Oranjestad)—A night in can be just as fun as a night out on the town, especially if you got the right snacks to munch on. One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is "funchi hasa" (fried polenta sticks). A super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics

So what is funchi hasa? Funchi, or



Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour*
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.



When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce.

Note: We recommend the FUNCHI FRESKU polenta flour brand that is sold in all supermarkets on the island. You can also use yellow corn flour from the brand PAN. □

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.



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Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
Treasure Cove | El Patio Tacos & Tequila | M8 Boutique
Fusion Restaurant, Tapas, Wine & Piano Bar

Mother's Day Brunch at the Sunset Grille, a heartfelt affair



(Palm Beach)—The newly renovated Sunset Grille celebrates Mother's Day on May 11th from 11 am to 2pm with a special event, serving unlimited à la carte brunch dishes over endless Champagne Billecart-Salmon flutes.

Mother's Day Brunch at the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino is a cherished tradition that brings together friends and families of all ages to celebrate mothers and matriarchs. Guests enjoy delicious cuisine in

an indoor setting that beautifully blends the restaurant's classic style with patrons' contemporary taste in a fresh perspective.

Among menu Highlights: Lobster Benedict, Oyster & Caviar, Tuna Tartare, Smoked Duck, Scallops, Braised Short Ribs, Lamb Chops and more. For those who prefer their desserts liquid, the menu also features Espresso Martini and White Chocolate Raspberry Martini, among other sweet sensations.

Brunch, blending breakfast and lunch into one leisurely affair, is made more special with the choice of Champagne Billecart-Salmon, from the Champagne region, in France. The prestigious house of Billecart-Salmon was founded in 1818 and has been making award winning champagne since, praised globally for its exceptional quality and balance.

For the full menu of Mother's day please visit the website <https://sunsetgrillearuba.com/mothers-day-brunch/>, book online through open table or call 526-6612.

The Sunset Grille, Aruba's only alfresco steakhouse, offers prime cuts of meat, fresh seafood, shareable plates and signature specialties crafted with timeless sophistication. The restaurant has been an island favorite for over two decades, blending its legendary brand of hospitality with culinary innovation. Open nightly for dinner at 5:30 pm or visit Sunset Bar for handcrafted cocktails, before or after dinner, or anytime during the day for a small bite and a refreshing drink. □



Visit the natural bridges of Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—After you've visited the Alto Vista Church, the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and the mini natural pool that is located right next to it, you're next up around the northern coast line must be the Natural Bridge. Once the largest natural bridge in the Caribbean, this bridge has been a tourist attraction for many years.

The bridge was formed during thousands of years, cut and crafted by the wild waves that crash into the coral stone walls of the coast. Before its collapse, this bridge measured 30 meters in length and 7 meters in height, making it the biggest

natural bridge in the Caribbean at the time. For many years, this site was also a frequently visited beach, as the bridge had a small opening through which the water would flow into the tiny beach.

Unfortunately in 2005, the bridge collapsed, and the little beach dried up. Despite this, this site remained a tourist attraction, with many visitors walking along the coral cliffs of the bridge to see the spectacular view of the northern coastline and the Caribbean Sea. Visitors can also still visit the souvenir shop on the left of the bridge entrance.



While the natural bridge no longer is functional, there is now a smaller natural bridge very close. This bridge is often called the "Baby Bridge" or "Daughter Bridge". □

Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost: Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mangoes hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year- round.

Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif



There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of

fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu



Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind



A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system. Start the day with a 'batida' (smoothie) enriched with a local veggie touch or select your restaurant that offers local vegetable dishes to get the real pure taste of it.

Comcomber chiquito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Comcomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year- round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna



In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pampuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □

Forgotten gems Open air movie theaters

(Oranjestad)—During the span of over 100 years, Aruba only saw five open air movie theatres. Now practically obsolete on the island, these theaters were once frequently visited by locals and migrants in the 20th century.

The first open air theater was constructed in 1920 and was commissioned by Shon Eduard (Eddy) de Veer. This theater was located at the Hotel Colombia in Oranjestad, which is now where the Aruban census office is located. The theater was simple; it only consisted of



a screen, and visitors had to bring their own chairs to enjoy the popular silent movies of the time.

American migrants who worked in the refinery and lived in the Lago Colony in Sero Colorado also had their piece of the pie with their Open air Theatre, which formed part of the Esso Club, also known as the Pan-Am Club. It was at this theater that "Talkies" were first streamed, movies with sound. This theater mostly streamed American blockbusters for the American expats, this way making sure that these migrant were not missing out on entertainment from their home land.

In the 1950's and 60's, Savaneta saw their own open air theater, located in front of the Marinier's Kazerne (Marine Barracks). This theater was mostly visited by the neighboring marines, who didn't have much entertainment other than movies at that time.

The last and most recent open air theater was con-

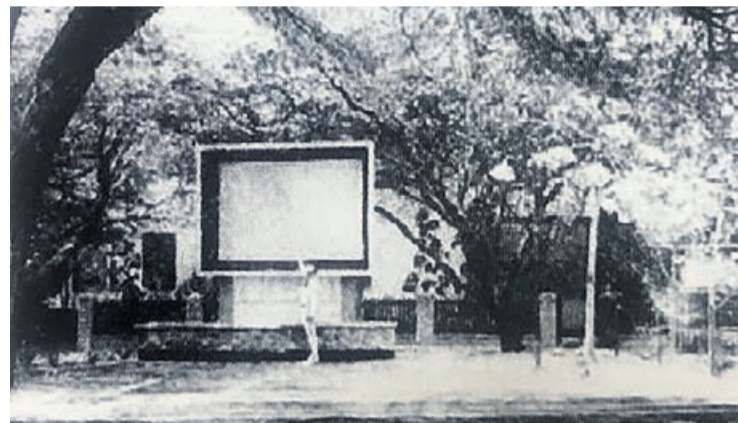


structed in the form of a drive-in theater. A popular American concept, the Drive Inn located in Balashi was a hot spot for teenagers, who had the habit of cramming all their friends in one car to go see the movies. For this phenomenon there was a separate price that you had to pay called the "car crash".

This theater closed around 2012, but was re-opened during the pandemic in

July 2020, where movies were streamed on a gigantic screen set up in front of stacked containers. However, this nostalgic form of entertainment did not last very long as it was closed again only a year or two later. Nowadays you can still see the stacked containers when you drive near the bridge in Balashi. □

Source: "De kolibrie op de rots en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba" by Evert Bongers.



Aruba: The island of Aloes

ORANJESTAD – Aloe vera, a succulent plant species, is renowned for its incredible properties for the skin. It is widely distributed and usually grows in tropical, semi-tropical and arid climates on the planet. But this plant also had a very prominent role in the history of Aruba, and its significance to the island's economy endures to this day.

The leaves of Aloe vera contain a good amount of gel which when used topically, is great for the skin. Traditionally, Arubans use this gel to treat minor burns and other skin ailments, or just to keep skin supple and looking bright and nourished. Aside from the gel, aloe contains a bitter, yellow substance (called



aloin) which is a gentle but powerful laxative, and it is also the origin of the industry of aloe in Aruba.

According to the website of Royal Aruba Aloe, Aloe vera was introduced in Aruba around 1840, when most of the island's inhabitants were farmers of little means. Dutch Governor Van Raders introduced the plant after it had been introduced in other islands of the Caribbean to cultivate and harvest the aloe to produce the laxative.

Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes."

Under Commander Jan Helenus Ferguson (1866-1871), aloe experienced a boom, which is why there is a road named after him, which goes through the aloe fields. In the 19th century, Aruba was the main supplier of aloin for laxative, which was imported abroad to the United States and Europe. The aloin from Aruba and Curaçao was known to be one of the best in the world and was more expensive, which meant that at the time, it had significant economic impact, particularly for the local farmers.

However, by the time the oil industry arrived on Aruba, it changed the labor market on Aruba, shifting away from agriculture. It would be after World War II that aloe would make a comeback. And eventually, as science learned about the amazing properties of aloe gel, the industry shifted from produc-



ing laxative to producing skin care. An interesting fact is that in 1951, the production of Aruban aloe amounted to around 30 percent of the total global production!

The impact and relevance of aloe is visible all around Aruba. While most homes will have a few plants for personal use and decoration, houses are also decorated with aloe motifs, and at some point, aloe even featured on post stamps. Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes." And in 1955, the aloe became a part of Aruba's coat of arms, symbolizing prosperity for the island. □

Images from the archive of the National Library of Aruba.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

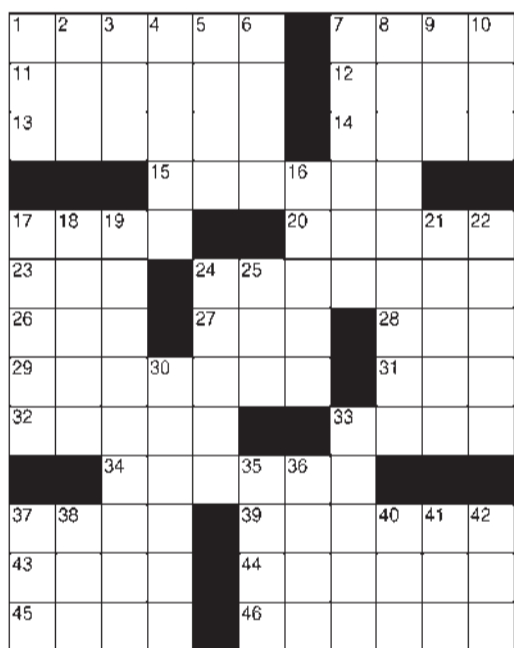
ACROSS

- 1 Predica-
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- 7 Pindar
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- 11 Piled up
- 12 Latvia's
capital
- 13 Pooh's
pal
- 14 Pop of
music
- 15 Seek,
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- 17 Power
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- 20 Vigilant
- 23 2001
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- 24 Predict
- 26 Beagle or
boxer
- 27 Objective
- 28 Kinsey
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- 29 Spreads,
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- 31 Green of
"Casino
Royale"
- 32 Small
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- 33 Calls on
- 34 Ignores
the limit
- 37 Too
- 39 Big-billed
bird
- 43 Foot
features
- 44 Painter
Monet
- 45 Artist's
inspiration

DOWN

- 46 Lent a
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- 1 That ship
- 2 Semi-
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- 3 Beam of
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- 4 Left on
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- 5 Llama's
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- 6 Adam's
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- 7 Baltimore
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- 8 Goes off
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- 9 Easter
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- 10 Put into
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- 16 Rural busi-
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- 17 Crumple
- 18 Detached
- 19 Fierce
females
- 21 "Super-
man"
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- 22 Michener
book
- 24 Un-
faithful
- 25 Pipeline
flow
- 30 Go
against
- 33 Routine
- 35 Engrave
- 36 Portion
(out)
- 37 Money
machine
- 38 Singer
Reed
- 40 Trophy
- 41 Sports
drink
suffix
- 42 Homer's
neighbor



5-10

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-9 CRYPTOQUOTE

A N N S Y P F X Z K S , D B A Y J U
R U U D R A Y S U N P U A N P F
N X R M Z K A U T Z K U , C Y M W D U Z R
M W U K W Y U J N X R M Z K A U .
— L Z K S O Z Z T

Cryptoquote: TO DESCRIBE MY
MOTHER WOULD BE TO WRITE ABOUT A
HURRICANE IN ITS PERFECT POWER. — MAYA
ANGELOU



Cruise ship Schedule: May 1 - 11 2025

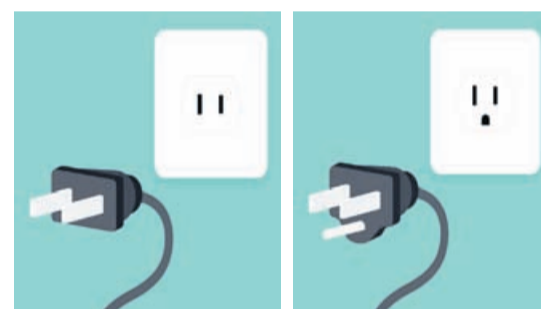
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THU	01	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	09.00	23.00	C	1		
SUN	04	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	G	-		
TUE	06	CARNIVAL MAGIC	08.00	22.00	C	1		
WED	07	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1		
SUN	11	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-		

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



OpenAI reverses course and says its nonprofit will continue to control its business



The OpenAI logo appears on a mobile phone in front of a screen showing part of the company website in this photo taken on Nov. 21, 2023 in New York.

Associated Press

By **MATT O'BRIEN** and **THALIA BEATY**
AP Business Writers

After months spent pursuing a plan to convert itself into a for-profit business, OpenAI is reversing course and said Monday its nonprofit will continue to control the company that makes ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence products.

"We made the decision for the nonprofit to stay in control after hearing from civic leaders and having discussions with the offices of the Attorneys General of California and Delaware," said CEO Sam Altman in a letter to employees.

Altman and the chair of OpenAI's nonprofit board, Bret Taylor, said the board

made the decision for the nonprofit to retain control of OpenAI. The nonprofit already has a for-profit arm, but that arm will be converted into a public benefit corporation "that has to consider the interests of both shareholders and the mission," Taylor said.

However, Taylor declined to say Monday how large of an ownership stake the nonprofit will have in the new public benefit corporation.

Altman said in a call with reporters that the nonprofit will choose the board members if the public benefit corporation.

Public benefit corporations were first created in Delaware in 2013 and other states have adopted the

same or similar laws that require the companies to pursue not just profit but a social good.

Public benefit corporations, which include Amalgamated Bank and the online education platform Coursera, need to define that social good, which can vary broadly, when they incorporate.

Altman said that converting from a limited liability company to a public benefit corporation "just sets up us to be a more understandable structure to do the things that a company of our scope has to do."

"There's so much more demand to use AI tools than we thought there was going to be," Altman said. Getting access to more capital will make it easier for OpenAI to pursue mergers and acquisitions "and other normal things companies would do," Altman said. □

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San Nicolas
Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

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Paradera: Tel.588 6638
San Nicolas:
Aloe:Tel.584 4606

OTHER

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
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EMERGENCY

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Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

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FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia
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Lovie Simone leads new series that adapts Judy Blume's 'Forever...' for TV

By **ALICIA RANCILIO**
Associated Press

While cutting together scenes for the new series "Forever," Mara Brock Akil, who has created shows like "Girlfriends," "Being Mary Jane," and "The Game," recalls asking her video editor to pause for a moment. Was there a problem? No. Akil was watching someone very right: the show's female lead, Lovie Simone. "I was like, 'Oh my God, not only is this girl beautiful, she's acting her (expletive) off,'" Akil said. It was a privilege to know that "something that I wrote is aligned with her moment."

The title "Forever" may sound familiar because it shares a name with the Judy Blume novel first published in 1965, but frequently challenged by critics because it includes teen sexuality. This version is also a coming-of-age story but takes place in 2018 and 2019 instead of the 1960s, and the couple at the center of the story is Black. The series debuts Thursday on Netflix.

"I think it does a good job at mimicking the energy and the intention of the book," said Simone who had not read "Forever..." prior to this job.

The protagonists, Keisha



Actor Lovie Simone poses for a portrait on Friday, April 18, 2025, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

and Justin (played by Simone and newcomer Michael Cooper Jr.), meet at a New Year's party, like in the book.

The two knew one another as kids, but it's been years since they've seen each other, and now there are romantic sparks.

Simone says that while yes, the show is about young romance and firsts, there's plenty of character development too.

"It was like, 'Wow, I am the love interest, AND I have a story to tell while being the love.'" It's really nice to not just be the girlfriend," she said.

Early on in filming, Simone and Cooper purposely kept their distance off screen to make their reacquaintance authentic.

"In the beginning of the story, they hadn't talked in so long so, we didn't want to have too much rap-

port," she said. "We were like, 'OK. We're not gonna see each other too much ... We still kind of want to be strangers a little bit.'"

Keisha is also grappling with betrayal by her ex-boyfriend who shared an intimate video of her that was seen by other students. She transferred schools to escape the bullying. Keisha is determined to be perfect in all things to get into Howard University and make

her mother proud.

That pressure to live up to high standards is a familiar one for many teens and "we can all relate to those feelings and how they make us feel," said Simone. Set in Los Angeles, the show was filmed in real neighborhoods giving it authenticity. The characters shop in the Fairfax District. Keisha lives in Crenshaw, and Justin's family lives in Park-Windsor Hills, an affluent African American neighborhood. Simone wasn't familiar with LA prior to filming. She grew up in New York and now lives in Atlanta.

"I don't know too much about LA culture. I know the stigmas around it, but I don't know LA culture, and coming here and falling in love with the true LA culture was so amazing," she said. Simone began acting around age 9 and remains the only actor in her family. She has a twin sister, Yuri, a musician who goes by Reiko The Giant. Simone's original dream was to be like Selena, Miley, Keke and Zendaya.

"I really wanted to be the girl on Disney Channel with the neon wand, tracing out the logo," Simone said, adding that as she got older, she felt a pull to more serious stories. □

Book Review: Isabel Allende's latest strong female protagonist is a journalist



This cover image released by Ballantine shows "My Name is Emilia Del Valle" by Isabel Allende.

(Ballantine via Associated Press)

By **ANITA SNOW**
Associated Press

Best-selling author Isabel Allende has been beloved for decades by millions of passionately loyal readers for her strong female protagonists and epic story lines stretching across the Americas.

In novels such as "The House of the Spirits," "Eva Luna," and more recently, "Violeta," indomitable women take center stage and drive dramatic narratives conjured into being with a splash of magic realism by the writer who was born in Peru and raised in Chile. It's no different in Al-

lende's latest book, "My Name is Emilia del Valle," which features an adventurous journalist in San Francisco during the late 1800s. Young Emilia is surprisingly intrepid for a female of her time, challenging and vaulting over gender barriers as she moves from writing cheap novels under a male pseudonym to pushing for her real byline as a woman to be published above her newspaper articles.

Much of Emilia's intellectual curiosity and confidence comes from her stepfather, a Spanish speaking schoolteacher who marries her

pregnant mother, a novice Catholic nun abandoned after a romance with a wealthy Chilean aristocrat. Although Allende initially sets her story in the United States, she gradually moves the action to Chile when Emilia persuades a newspaper editor to let her travel to the South American country to help cover Chile's civil war, emphasizing her Spanish language skills. She's dispatched along with fellow newspaper correspondent Eric Whelan, who will focus on the main news while she handles the features. Along with the professional

challenge, Emilia wants to learn more about the father she has never known, and herself. Once in Chile, Emilia faces extreme dangers she has never imagined and questions where she came from and where she's going. It's a story likely to be appreciated by the legions of Allende fans who have ensured she's considered the world's most widely read Spanish-language author. Although the Chilean-American novelist is fluent in English, and has long lived in California, she writes in her native Spanish and her books are translated. □

Can Aaron Judge hit .400? Peak Barry Bonds couldn't, and that shows how daunting the math is

By NOAH TRISTER
AP Baseball Writer

Ted Williams is the last American Leaguer to hit .400, and there are actually plenty of similarities between him and Aaron Judge.

The one major difference is in the strikeout column, and that's why Judge is highly unlikely to repeat Williams' famous feat.

With a .423 batting average through 34 games, Judge leads the major leagues in hitting by a whopping 74 points over New York Yankees teammate Paul Goldschmidt. Judge's OPS of 1.287 is actually the same number Williams finished with when he hit .406 in 1941. Williams averaged a homer every 12.32 at-bats that year. Judge is hitting one every 11.82 so far this season.

But Williams struck out only 27 times in all of 1941. Judge has already done so 31 times.

Judge has struck out in 20.3% of his plate appearances. In the live ball era, only one player in the AL or NL has even hit .350 with a strikeout rate of at least 20%. That was Manny Ramirez at .351 in 2000.

Still, Judge's strengths and his one big weakness can



New York Yankees' Aaron Judge hits a single during the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Tampa Bay Rays, Saturday, May 3, 2025, in New York.

Associated Press

help us come up with a road map of sorts for aspiring .400 hitters.

Step One: Shrink the sample size.

It's no accident that all of baseball's .400 hitters played before the season expanded to 162 games. Smaller samples lead to more extreme stats, and when Williams hit .406 in 1941, he only played in 143 games. George Brett played in 117 games when he hit .390 in 1980. Tony

Gwynn topped out at .394 in 1994 the season that ended in mid-August because of a strike.

No, that doesn't mean players should try to get injured or miss games for other reasons. But a high walk total is imperative if you want to qualify for the batting title while still keeping your at-bat total reasonably low.

Williams had only 456 at-bats in 1941 because he drew 147 walks.

Ichiro Suzuki was a prolific contact hitter who didn't walk much. He would routinely end up with around 700 at-bats in a season, and it's extremely hard to sustain a .400 average for that long.

Step Two: Make contact. This is the problem for Judge and other power hitters of this era. A player who strikes out in 20% of his plate appearances has to hit .500 on the PAs he doesn't strike out in if he's

going to bat .400 overall. Right now Judge is 55 for 99 when he doesn't strike out an extraordinary mark but not one that is likely to last. Step Three: Ride a BABIP heater.

There's a lot of luck involved in a player's batting average on balls in play (BABIP), but there are some ways a hitter can improve it. Hitting line drives is obviously preferable to hitting popups, and speedy players can turn grounders into infield hits, boosting their BABIP and batting average that way. George Sisler had a BABIP of .422 in 1922 when he hit .420.

Step Four: Hit homers. Unfortunately, BABIP numbers like Sisler's don't happen much, especially now. The overall BABIP across the major leagues this year is .288. It was over .300 back in 1930 which happened to be the year Bill Terry became the last National Leaguer to hit .400. Fielders have more success turning balls in play into outs than they did then, but one way to avoid that is to hit a lot of homers. When Rod Carew hit .388 in 1977, he was boosted by a BABIP of .408, but it was also the year he tied his career high with 14 home runs. □

Marc-Andre Fleury has played his last NHL game, but retirement can wait a few more weeks

By DAVE CAMPBELL
AP Sports Writer

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Marc-Andre Fleury has exited the NHL after 21 seasons in the net, eager for more family time and an end to the on-ice tributes while fully accepting at age 40 that he's no longer at his best.

OK, so he's not quite ready to completely call it quits.

Fleury revealed on Monday during a season-ending interview in Minnesota that he has agreed to join Team Canada for the ice hockey world championship later this month. With the Wild eliminated four days ago from the NHL playoffs, Fleury's calendar is wide open.

"Just a little longer, right? I went home, my kids were crazy, I was like, 'Geez, I've got to keep playing,'" Fleury said jokingly.

After apologizing aloud if he wasn't supposed to announce his participation yet,

Fleury said he was looking forward to reuniting with Sidney Crosby, his former Pittsburgh teammate who was the first celebrity addition to Canada's squad.

"I think it'll be fun to go spend some time together and yell at him in practice a bit, keep him honest," said Fleury, whose post-season action was limited to the third period and overtime of Game 5 against Vegas when an illness forced Wild starter Filip Gustavsson out.

The tournament takes place in Stockholm, Sweden, and Herning, Denmark, starting on Friday and running through May 25. Hockey Canada announced Sunday that Crosby would join the team coached by Dean Evason, Fleury's former coach with the Wild who's now with Columbus. The only goalie who'd been announced previously was New York Rangers prospect Dylan Garand, though another regular NHL netminder surely will be next. □



Vegas Golden Knights center William Karlsson (71) battles for the puck against Minnesota Wild goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury (29), left wing Kirill Kaprizov (97), center Joel Eriksson Ek (14) and defenseman Jonas Brodin (25) during the third period of Game 5 of a first-round NHL hockey playoff series Tuesday, April 29, 2025, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

Sinner returns from doping ban to great fanfare at Italian Open

By **ANDREW DAMPF**

AP Sports Writer

ROME (AP) — Rarely has an athlete been welcomed back from a doping ban with so much fanfare.

Top-ranked tennis player Jannik Sinner was treated to a stadium filled with nearly 5,000 fans for his first practice session at the Italian Open on Monday the day his three-month banishment from the sport expired.

The training session which was shown live on local TV came after Sinner was the most celebrated player in a ceremony to honor the Italian teams that swept the Davis Cup and Billie Jean King Cup last year.

Both trophies were on hand and the Campo Centrale crowd belted out Italy's na-



Jannik Sinner attends a training ahead of the Italian Open in Rome, Monday, May 5, 2025.

Associated Press

to me.

"I know how many sacrifices I made and my daily routine was always practice, practice, practice. But at that moment I didn't have any of that. I came to understand that what's important to me are the people by your side. That they give you the strength to move forward and continue smiling."

Besides his family in the German-speaking Alto Adige region of northern Italy, Sinner also spent more time with friends at home in Monaco, participated in other sports like cycling, and then only gradually came back to tennis.

"We went about a month without touching (a racket) and then we restarted really softly," Sinner said.

"When we started pushing more, blisters developed on my hands."

That was something I hadn't experienced in a long time."

Didn't want to accept ban The settlement was made after WADA appealed a decision last year by the International Tennis Integrity Agency to fully exonerate Sinner for what it deemed to be an accidental contamination by a banned anabolic steroid in March 2024.

The settlement raised questions, since it conveniently allowed Sinner not to miss any Grand Slams and return at his home tournament.

The Italian Open is the last big clay-court event before the French Open, which starts on May 25. "I didn't want to do it in the beginning, and also it was a bit not easy for me to accept it, because I know what really happened," Sinner said of the ban. "But sometimes we have to choose the best in a very bad moment, and that's what we did. So it's all over now. So I'm happy to play tennis again." Many fellow pros feel Sinner was treated too lightly. Serena Williams told Time magazine she "would have gotten 20 years" if she was involved in a similar case: "Let's be honest. □

tional anthem.

It's the first time that Italy has had a No. 1 player for its home tournament. Still, Sinner was at a loss to explain why he attracts so much attention.

"I don't know. Honestly, I think I'm a simple 23-year-old kid. I'm good at playing tennis but I'm not changing the world," he said. "I always remember that I come from a small town of 2,000 people. Being here in Rome and playing in front of so many people is a big deal."

With a conclave to elect a new pope set to begin just down the road at the Vatican on Wednesday, Sinner's return prompted local headlines that declared "Habemus Sinner" a variant of the Latin words "Habemus Papam!" that are announced from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica when a pope is elected. Lost and confused by ban The scene at the Foro Italico came in sharp contrast to how Sinner felt back in February when he received a three-month ban in a settlement with the World Anti-Doping Agency.

"At the start I was a bit confused because I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do," Sinner said. "Then I went home and stayed with my family. I tried to understand better what was really important

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